

CHULA VISTA POLICE DEPARTMENT

PERSONAL SAFETY

COMMUNITY RELATIONS UNIT



Parking Lot and Vehicle Safety Tips

Be aware and alert for predators hanging around in a parking lot.

Plan when to go and where to park. Try to park near sidewalks or walkways. Teach your family to enter and exit the car quickly. Do not get out of the car if not safe to do so.

Park in well lit areas and avoid isolated areas. Avoid parking near dumpsters, woods, or anywhere that limits your visibility. Secure your doors, windows and sunroof before leaving your vehicle.

Scan the area around your car as you approach it, have your keys in hand ready to enter your car when you arrive.

If returning alone to your vehicle and you feel unsafe, try to walk with others going in that direction. Mommies with children are usually a safe bet.

Don't carry so many packages that you can be easily caught off guard and make yourself an easy target.

Look at the car parked on the driver's side of your vehicle, and the passenger side. If a male is sitting alone in the seat nearest your car and you feel uncomfortable to enter your car, return to the business you left and ask for an escort.

Also be wary of vans parked next to your car. If you are parked next to a van, you can enter your car from the passenger door, or again, return to the business you left and ask an employee to escort you safely to your car. Many predators attack their victims by pulling them into vans while the women are attempting to get into their cars.

Lock your doors immediately after getting in your car. Keep doors locked while driving.

Be aware of notes left on your windshield. Recently thieves have used that distraction to get people out of a car after they have started the engine, then the thief moves in to steal the car while the driver is retrieving the note.

Another trick predators use is to beckon you to get out of your vehicle telling you there is a problem with your car, or they may pretend to be disabled and need help. This is often a way to get you outside making you vulnerable for attack.

While driving, if you think you're being followed, drive to a well-lit public place that has a lot of people and activity going on and call for help.





Away from Home

Always be alert to your surroundings and people around you. When alert, it's harder to be caught off guard.

It's important to give advance thought about being caught in a vulnerable situation. Think about "what if" scenarios and plan how you might react if confronted with an unwanted situation. **This may be the single most important thing all of us should do, and do often enough to respond appropriately if necessary.**

When possible travel with a friend, and tell others when you're going out and where you'll be.

Walk confidently and at a steady pace. Make eye contact with people as they pass. This sends a message that you can be a good witness and identify them later if a situation arises.

Stay in well-lit areas as much as possible. Avoid doorways, tall bushes, isolated stairwells and other areas, alleys and places where someone could hide.

Less is best when out and about. Carry only the cash or credit cards that you need at that time. Avoid carrying your social security card. Don't flaunt money or jewelry or call attention to your valuables.

Purses should be carried securely between your arm and your body. Long straps are an easy target for a purse-snatcher, and if you have long straps, secure those straps in diagonal fashion across your body.

Avoid conversation from strangers on the street; continue walking. Don't allow others to get close enough to you that they're violating your personal space. Always try and stay more than an arm length away from stranger in case an attempt is made to grab you.

Stay alert, keep safe.

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At Home

Post a list of emergency numbers including family members, trusted friends and neighbors, and emergency personnel.

Never hide your keys on your property.

Lock your doors and secure your windows, even when home, or if you only leave for a few minutes. Never leave your garage door open and your home unattended. This is an invitation to be burglarized. Do not leave your garage door opener in plain view in your vehicle, particularly if parked in your driveway.

Never open the door to a stranger. Require identification. This includes repair/delivery people and law enforcement officers. Use at least a 180-degree peephole to view who's at the door. Never feel compelled to open the door, one never knows who or what can be on the other side.

Do not allow young children to answer the door. Go over safety rules with all members of the household.

When strangers ask to use your phone, just say no. If there is a real emergency, the stranger should stay outside and you can make an emergency call for them.

If you arrive home and see signs that your home has been broken into: DO NOT ENTER. Go to a safe place and contact law enforcement and wait at the safe place until they arrive.

If you suspect someone is prowling outside of your home, make the prowler think that several people are home, particularly males. Contact law enforcement to report a prowler outside your home.

If a burglar ever confronts you in your home; do not get in between the burglar and the exit. Instead, be a good witness and remember things like height, build, race and outstanding things like tattoos or piercings. Write these things down then report that information to law enforcement as quickly as possible.

Never leave your home and leave notes on the door with information for the handy man or someone you expect to arrive. In actuality, you are advertising that you're not home and telling a burglar to go ahead and enter your home.

At the end of a day, have your keys ready to insert into the lock and get inside your home without delay. Don't give someone the opportunity to catch you off guard.

Whenever being dropped off at home, request the driver to wait until you are safely inside.

Pay attention to your gut instinct, if something doesn't feel right, it probably isn't. Pay closer attention and take appropriate action.





While jogging, walking or hiking

Let people know where you will be running and how long you'll be gone.

Run with a buddy and/or a dog.

Run in highly visible, well-populated areas.

Be aware of your surroundings.

Don't become so distracted by your iPod or radio that you lose focus of your immediate environment. Keep the volume low so you can hear everything around you.

Vary your route frequently to avoid the risk of being followed.

Pay attention to your instincts. If an area or a situation doesn't feel right, immediately leave.

Take along a cell phone.

Have personal identification with you. It should contain a phone number of an emergency contact as well as information about any allergies or other conditions that may be needed by a paramedic.

Consider taking along pepper spray. Two-ounce canisters can attach to a key chain

Consider bringing a whistle or tiny alarm to attract attention if you're in trouble.

Don't run at night

Stay alert, keep safe.